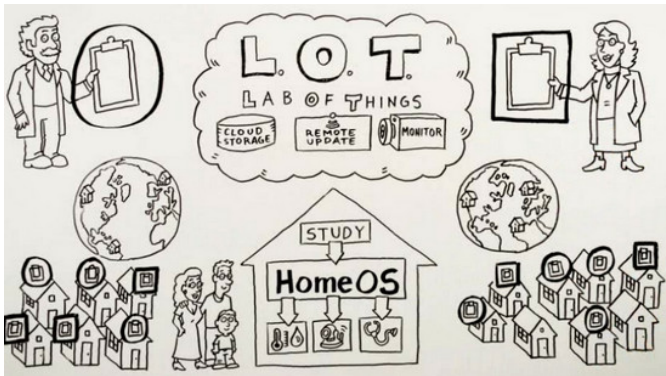


Microsoft Continues Stabbing at Automation

Written by Marco Attard
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Microsoft releases the Lab of Things (LoT)-- a software platform designed to help researchers launch home automation trials building on the company's earlier work in the field, namely [HomeOS](#).



Revealed back in 2012, HomeOS was the next step in the Microsoft home automation dream first expressed by Bill Gates over 10 years ago at Comdex. It follows the desktop PC model, with "all devices in the home appear as peripherals connected to a single logical PC."

LoT is cloud-based addition to the HomeOS concept, with smart devices automatically appearing on a web-based interface. According to MIT Technology Review, the system recognises sensors as soon as they are connected to the same network and allows one to remotely check on various devices (such as security cameras) and receive custom alerts via email.

A large LoT trial had 20 houses wired with various sensors monitoring water and electricity use, each feeding into the system without need to program house layouts or inhabitant details. Multiple researchers collaborated on the project, with the platform handling the sharing of data across multiple participants.

"We can identify the floor plan of the house, which people are in the house, which rooms they're in, and the electrical and water usage," Microsoft researcher Kamin Whitehouse says. "No configuration [is] required. You open your phone app and it's there."

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Being a research platform, LoT will probably not find a commercial application. Microsoft also fails to mention whether HomeOS will hit the market any time in the future-- but it is interesting to learn the company hasn't forgotten the "smart home" dream.

Go [Lab of Things](#)

Go [Microsoft Has an OS for Your House \(MIT Technology Review\)](#)